THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): The following mining leases for Iron Ore were granted in Bailadila area of Bastar district in favour of M/s. National Mineral Development Corporation Ltd. (NMDC):—

Deposit No.—14 (Mineralised Zone)	Mining lease expired on 11.9.95
Deposit No. —14 (Non Mineralised Zone)	Mining lease expired on 6.12.95
Deposit No. 5	Mining lease expired on 11.9.95
Deposit No. 11	Mining lease expired on 12.9.97
Deposit No. 10	Mining lease expired on 10.9.95
Deposit No. 10 (Float Ore)	Mining lease expired on 11.9.97
Deposit No. 3	Mining lease valid upto 2.8.2007

Barring deposit No. 3. NMDC applied for 1st renewal of the other six mining leases to the State Govt. of Madhya Pradesh. Since the entire area covered under these six leases falls in the reserved forest land, the State Government of Madhya Pradesh has sent these proposals to Ministry of Environment & Forest, Government of India for their clearance. Ministry of Environment & Forest has already communicated final clearance for renewal of mining leases in respect of Deposit-10 and Deposit-10 Float Ore and has also granted working permission for these two leases upto 18.6.1999. Ministry of Environment and Forest has also granted first phase clearance for renewal of four mining leases viz Deposit 14(MZ), Deposit 14(NMZ), Deposit—5 and Deposit—11 and has also extended working permission in respect of these four mines upto 18.6.1999.

The Majhagawan mining lease of diamond held by M/s. National Mineral Development Corporation Ltd. which lies in the revenue land, expired on 14.6.1995. The application for its renewal has been sent to the State Govt. of Madhya Pradesh by NMDC. Renewal has not been granted by the State Govt. as yet, however, the mining operation in the lease area is continuing under the provisions of Mineral Concession Rules, 1960.

As on date no proposal for grant of mining lease for diamond from the State of Madhya Pradesh is pending for approval with the Central Government. However, a proposal dated 17.11.98 was received from State Govt. of Madhya Pradesh for grant of prospecting licence to undertake air borne survey over an area of 4600 Sq. Kms. for diamond in Behradih block of Raipur District in favour of M/s. B. Vijaykumar Chhattisgarh Exploration Pvt. Ltd., Raipur.

Flouting of Mining norms in Andhra Pradesh

1647. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether flouting of mining norms to favour large number of vested interest contractors in Andhra Pradesh has been reported in recent past;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether some action has been taken to put behind bars the corrupt officials of Mining Department of Andhra Pradesh; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) to (d) The

information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Revival of Steel Units

1648. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state the steps taken to revive steel units running in losses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): Government has taken several steps to revive steel units running in losses which inter alia include the following:

(i) To boost the demand and consumption of steel the Development Commissioner for Iron & Steel (DCI&S) has launched a National Campaign for increasing the demand for steel especially in non-traditinal sectors, such as, rural and agro based industrial sector.

(ii) To reduce input for steel making, the special import duty on several inputs such as coking coal (ash content <12%) non-coking coal (ash content>12%), metallurgical coke, ferro nickel, charge nickel and nickel oxide sinters, low silica limestone and graphite electrodes (>28") has recently been waived.

(iii) Anti dumping duty on Hot Rolled Coils imported from Ukraine and Russia has recently been recommended. Steps are being taken for strengthening of anti dumping investigative machinery.

(iv) Rationalisation of Duty Entitlement Pass Book (DEPB) rates for steel exports have been carried out to boost exports.

(v) A Steel Exporter' Forum has been set up to help steel exporters overcome bottlenecks in exports.

(vi) Enhanced project financing to steel sector by All India financial Institutions and relaxation of ECB norms has been strongly recommended.

(vii) Government has set up an Empowered Committee to examine and assist specific Research and Development Projects to improve technology for steel making and enhance quality of Indian Steel.

Target fixed for production of Steel

1649. SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any target has been fixed by Government for production of steel by public/private steel plants;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the target has not been achieved by them; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) and (b) After the liberalisation of the steel industry, the main producers of steel in the public and private sector plan their production of steel, based on demand projections. Estimates for total demand and availabilty of finished steel in the country are drawn up by the Development Commissioner for Iron and Steel on an annual basis. During 1998-99 the total demand and availability of finished steel (carbon) has been projected provisionally as under:

Total Demand	Domestic Availability
24.43 million tonnes	25.53 million tonnes

(c) and (d) There has been a slow down in the growth of production and consumption of finished steel in he last one year. The major reasons for the slow growth of steel sector include: